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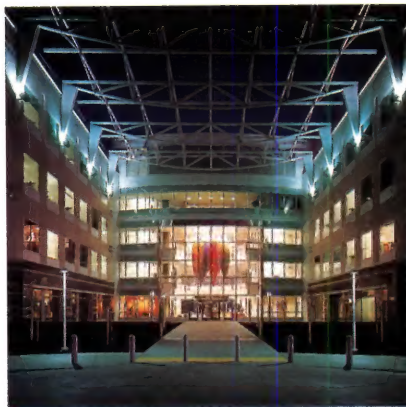
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Chiseled in Stone



The New Engineering Building sports a contemporary profile while incorporating the university's ubiquitous "Hokie stone."

Guided by a plan that sets a clear direction for campus development, Virginia Tech is enjoying a building boom that makes up for shortcomings in outdated facilities while preserving the best of existing campus traditions.

By Lisa Goff

Virginia Tech's motto, "Ut Prosim" – that I may serve – could easily double as the slogan of the University Architect's office, which is implementing the campus's 1994 Master Plan with a vigilance and precision worthy of the university's legendary Corps of Cadets.

In the past six years, nine major buildings have sprung up on the 2,200-acre campus, which is benefiting from a clarity of vision and consistency of action that were missing during the university's massive growth spurt 30 years ago. Under different circumstances, a burst of construction of this magnitude – about \$100 million worth – might breed chaos. But architectural order prevails in Blacksburg, where the university is using the building boom to reassert historical planning and design themes.

In addition, the siting of the new buildings marks a renewed commitment to a "walkable" campus at Virginia Tech, while their design continues a tradition of building materials and styles that have given the university its architectural personality. Plus, vigorous attention has been directed at preserving and enhancing the large open spaces that typify the pastoral campus.

The university architects involved in this recent flood of construction activity – first Peter Karp, FAIA, and now Scott Hurst, AIA – have protected the campus from the design miscues that often accompany ambitious building programs, while making sure that every new building adheres to the principles of a central master plan. The plan, updated in 1994 by Sasaki Associates of Watertown, Mass., places a high priority on preserving and strengthening the university's dual character as countryside and urban campus.

Located in a sylvan setting between the Blue Ridge and Allegheny mountains, more than half of Virginia Tech's acreage is open agricultural lands and woods. Yet the heart of the university is the residential and academic core which creates a compact campus around a large oval lawn known as the Drill Field. Sasaki Associates' plan calls for concentrating new development near the core while preserving the open spaces around the edges. Gradually, by building new structures in the gaps left between existing buildings, undefined open spaces will shrink with the addition of residences and classroom buildings organized around quadrangles. The broad intent: to increase students' enjoyment of the campus by creating a series of connected, human-scaled courtyards.

At the same time, the plan mandates that these structured landscapes of courtyards and quadrangles be connected by looser, more natural areas of native landscape in-between. Existing park-like areas will be preserved or expanded to protect the qualities of the campus that are familiar to so many alumni.

The most visible elements of such a campaign, of course, are new buildings. Executed in a material colloquially known as "Hokie stone" – limestone from a university-owned quarry less than three miles from campus – most of the latest generation of buildings exhibit a remarkable degree of architectural kinship with their predecessors. These structures do more than gesture to the Collegiate Gothic tradition of Virginia Tech, which was founded in 1872 as a land grant university. In planning, as well as in

continued on page 19



The sweeping corner of the engineering building draws its inspiration from the busy corner on which it stands.

At the Crossroads

Engineering Building

*Architects: Shriver and Holland Associates
with Skidmore Owings & Merrill*

Located at a highly visible street intersection near a major entrance to campus, this sleek new laboratory and office building for the College of Engineering projects a progressive image. Its linear design defines the northern edge of campus and reinforces an important crossroads of pedestrian circulation. A base of native limestone anchors the \$21.6 million building to the prominent corner site. Above ground level, the Modern building is clad in highly articulated precast concrete panels and an aluminum curtain wall that reflects the ambitions of a school dedicated to setting academic trends in engineering technology. Cantilevered entrance canopies are clad in silver kynar-coated aluminum. Inside, the building features a four-story atrium topped with a wedge-shaped clerestory window that bathes the space in daylight. Offices and labs are separated from each other by the circulation spine, which has developed into a favorite meeting place for students.



Going Underground

Burchard Hall

*Architects: Shriver and Holland Associates,
with Skidmore Owings & Merrill*

In the late 1960s, architect Henry Shriver opposed a plan to build an addition to the College of Architecture in the plaza bounded by Burruss Hall and Cowgill Hall, the architecture building that Shriver had designed just a few years before. "While it may not be the Piazza San Marco, it's one of the few truly urban spaces on the campus, and cherished by students," says Shriver, a Virginia Tech alumnus and principal of Shriver and Holland Associates in Norfolk.

Thirty years later Shriver and Holland was hired to deliver the same, long-postponed addition. Thanks to Shriver's tireless lobbying, Burchard Hall was built not on, but under the plaza, preserving a space where future generations of Hokies can mingle between classes. All that's visible of the new building at the plaza level is four glass pyramids that rise from the concrete surface. Beneath it lies 42,000 square feet of classroom and laboratory space bathed in daylight from the pyramidal skylights. Four design studios occupy a cavernous room directly beneath the skylights, whose computer-controlled louvers regulate the amount and direction of sunlight coming in. "It was like building a huge basement, which isn't a basement



at all," says Michael S. Hedgepeth, AIA, a Virginia Tech staff architect.

Design studios are bordered by wood, metal, plaster, and ceramics shops, a plastics lab, printmaking studio, and computer lab. Interior windows in the shops overlook the design studio, allowing daylight to filter in. Sandblasted glass blocks in the seating areas above the metal and wood shops provides natural light for hallways.

The light and transparent pyramids obscure the enormous construction challenges of building the new studios underground. Only the politics of the approval process were more difficult to navigate than the electric cables. "The structural demands were significant," says project manager Matthew Shriver, AIA, noting that the plaza's supporting structure had to be built strong enough to withstand not only the traffic of pedestrians, but heavy firefighting equipment. And the architects had to assure the university that a sub-level building wouldn't be perpetually in need of maintenance to repair water leaks.

Some students lament the loss of ornamental plantings displaced by the pyramids. And the architecture school – with 1,300 students, one of the largest in the country – still needs more space. But the \$8.5 million Burchard Hall represents a triumph of ingenuity in its preservation of a major urban space on the campus. – L.G.



Work areas such as the print-making studio (above) overlook the main design lab space.

Burchard Hall's centerpiece is the spacious design studio (facing page). Its four pyramidal skylights occupy a pedestrian plaza overhead (right).





Prairie Home Companions

Payne Quad

Architects: Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co.

One of the defining features of the Virginia Tech campus has been its vast open spaces – places such as the Prairie, an enormous meadow that turned into a frozen tundra during cold mountain winters. But in 1993, with the construction of Payne Hall, Virginia Tech took the first step toward converting the windswept Prairie into a formal residential quadrangle.

"We look at these intrusions into open spaces very carefully before we do them," says university architect Scott Hurst, AIA. "On the Prairie, we created two smaller open



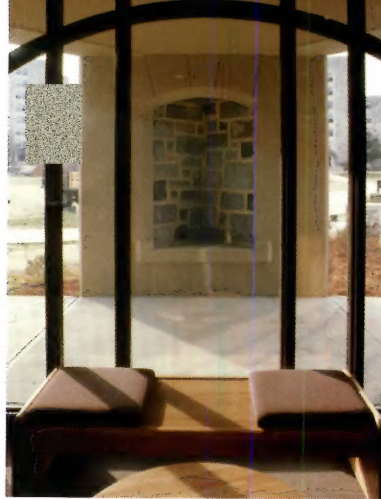
spaces more appropriately sized to human scale." These smaller spaces have become the backyards for the students living in those buildings – places to talk, play, or read.

Designed by Hanbury Evans Newill Vlattas & Co. of Norfolk, Payne Hall set the tone for future residential quarters with an exterior of Hokie stone and a hipped and gabled roofline that blends with the profile of older buildings nearby. But the interior – which, in addition to traditional single rooms, also contains apartment-style units, suites, and lofts under the eaves – offers a sharp departure from the spartan dormitories that dominate the campus' existing res-

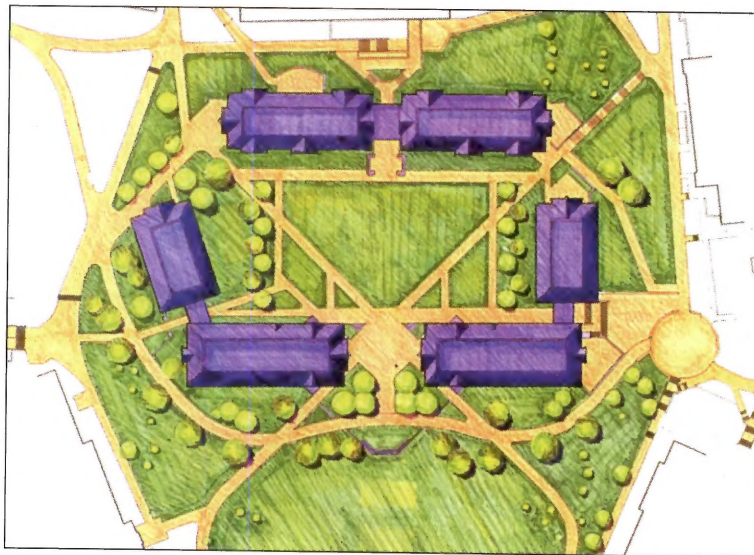


Whitney Cox

Payne Hall (left), built in 1993, set the tone for new residence halls. Traditional detailing (below left) gives the recent additions a substantial feel.



Lounges in the new dorms overlook sidewalks that slice through the corner of the building (left).



Payne Quad Site Plan

17

idential housing stock.

Last fall, Hanbury Evans finished two additional L-shaped dormitories that completed Payne Quad, a new outdoor green space along one of the most used east-west pedestrian paths. In their design, the architects honored the longstanding campus tradition of arched portals that lead through the buildings and into the quad. Lounges and study spaces are strategically placed throughout the buildings for the convenience of the 700 students who live in them. In addition, state-of-the-art security, telecommunications, and fire protection systems are incorporated into the buildings. – L.G.



Addition of the two new dormitories (in foreground, above) completes the new quad.



Courtesy SFCs



Alan Karchmer

Gateway to Campus

Advanced Communications and Information Technology Center

*Architects: Sherertz Franklin Crawford Shaffner,
with Esocoff & Associates Architects*

Scheduled for completion next July, the ACITC is the architectural equivalent of the college student who's triple-majoring while serving as president of the student body and captain of the swim team. An overachieving building that accomplishes myriad tasks, the \$26.9 million building fills in the last remaining gap in the ring of buildings surrounding the Drill Field. A window-lined reading room bridges the space between the ACITC and Newman Library, creating an arched vehicular entryway from Blacksburg's Main Street. Viewed from the Drill Field, the reading room will provide a backdrop for the university's signature War Memorial, a somber assembly of large stone pylons erected following World War II. Spanning the axial Mall entry was a controversial decision, because some university officials were reluctant to have the new design change the existing view of the War Memorial, says architect Philip A. Esocoff, FAIA, the design consultant on the project. The 150,000-square-foot ACITC, which will house research and teaching programs in information technology, honors campus building traditions with a contemporary interpretation of Collegiate Gothic design and a limestone exterior stone. "You can do something new, something good, while using the vocabulary of older buildings," says Esocoff.

Good Sports

Merryman Athletic Center

Architects: Ward/Hall Associates AIA

Winning sports teams and rapid growth in the popularity of women's sports created the need for new athletic facilities at Virginia Tech. Ward/Hall Associates AIA of Fairfax (with Worley Associates of Richmond as design consultants) filled that need with Merryman Athletic Center, a 40,000-square-foot, \$10.7 million facility that houses basketball and football offices, as well as providing meeting and training rooms, a 130-seat auditorium, and a spacious exhibition area for athletic trophies and memorabilia.

Merryman sports a contemporary facade, but Hokie stone at the base roots it firmly in the family of Virginia Tech buildings. An arched roofline – the building's most prominent feature – relates to the bold curvature of adjacent Cassell Coliseum. But the maroon color of the roof is the athletic center's own distinctive contribution to the campus landscape.



John McCormick



Heroic Stance

McComas Hall

Architects: Ayers/Saint/Gross Architects & Planners with Hastings & Chivetta Architects

This \$16.9 million student health and fitness center integrates health and recreational program elements into the same facility by combining a gymnasium, natatorium, elevated jogging track, aerobics studios, weight training rooms, and locker room facilities with a 30,000-square-foot student health and counseling center. A large limestone mass gives the building a heroic presence along Washington Street, signifying its importance along one of the primary routes onto campus. The main doors to the building are reached inside a large archway that takes its cues from older Collegiate Gothic buildings nearer the Drill Field. The archway also frames views toward a large green space bounded by McComas Hall and Rector Field House. Recreation-related elements of the building are expressed in the breakdown of the massing, which improves the scale and clarifies internal functions. Window details and patterns weave the building's individual parts into a cohesive composition.

continued from page 13

design and materials, they embody Collegiate Gothic principles.

Founded in 1872 as a land grant university, Virginia Tech had its beginnings in a cluster of buildings located near the town's Main Street. The university's rapid growth in mid-century began to give clear definition to the Drill Field as low-rise Gothic buildings were added around its perimeter. Behind these buildings lies a system of quadrangles connected by arched portals – landmarks which make it remarkably easy for a first-time visitor to get her bearings. That sense of knowing where you are, and what you'll find through the next archway, is the essence of Collegiate Gothic planning. "Symbolically, as well as practically, the portals are very important," says Hurst, the head of Tech's planning office.

Over the decades, successive building programs have perpetuated the use of Hokie stone in façades; where concrete was used, it generally appeared in a color range that complemented the mottled grays, terra cottas, and soft purples of the distinctive local limestone. But most new buildings constructed in the 1960s and 1970s paid little attention to the quadrangle-and-portals planning tradition. Squat McBryde Hall and misfit Derring Hall are two examples.

As the student body grew from 7,500 in the mid-1960s to more than 20,000 by 1980, new buildings were added to accommodate them. The edges of campus started to unravel. Mammoth dormitories and vast unlandscaped parking lots were an affront to the Collegiate Gothic tradition. Between the core and the new construction on the periphery, large open spaces were created. The common name for one – the Prairie – suggests the amorphous landscape that resulted.

Sasaki Associates' 1994 plan update reinforced the Collegiate Gothic ethos, which had gotten a boost in an earlier plan. "The previous plan, done in 1983, was really a beachhead for our work," says Philip A. Esocoff, FAIA, who was involved in the 1994 update. Now principal of his own practice, Esocoff & Associates Architects in Washington, D.C., he is the design consultant on the university's new Advanced Communications and Information Technology Center (ACITC), which is now under construction.

The 1983 plan mandated what Esocoff calls "buddy buildings" – new buildings built beside existing ones. The approach allowed for a network of interconnecting passageways to be created in the spaces between new buildings and old ones, often creating new atriums in the process. "Walking distances on the campus were starting to get pretty dreadful. This plan addressed that," says Esocoff. The 1994 master plan buttressed the earlier commitment to infill buildings and the creation of new quadrangles. It filled the last remaining gaps between buildings lining the Drill Field and directed construction of more infill buildings as needed. In addition, it urged an end to the suburbanization of the campus by building residential quads located close to the center of campus.

Doing that meant the loss of substantial portions of the Prairie and other recreational spaces. But, as Esocoff argues, design has to have an edge to it. Besides, several large and picturesque open spaces remain, including the Drill Field, which constitutes a kind of public park, and the wooded area surrounding the campus Duck Pond.

University staff notes that the current building boom at Virginia Tech is less an expansion than a replacement of space. Older residential buildings close to the Drill Field are being recycled into classrooms, and new housing is being built to house displaced students. New residential complexes such as Payne Quad and Harper Quad break up and re-order large wind-blown spaces such as the Prairie into enclosures that are better scaled to human habitation. Using the quadrangles and portals prescribed by Collegiate Gothic planning guidelines, the new residential complexes reproduce the primary building blocks of the campus core. "Preserving the pedestrian character of the campus is a top priority," says Hurst. "As we build new buildings, we want to keep a fairly close-knit pedestrian pattern."

Buildings recently completed or still under construction – such as the ACITC, Burchard Hall, McComas Student Health and Fitness Center, Merryman Athletic Center, and the New Engineering Building – represent a backlog of delayed projects. These new buildings have been sited in ways that create new quadrangles or complete partial ones. In the case of Burchard Hall, the new architecture school addition, a plaza was preserved.

Several future projects, such as a new chemistry and physics building, are to be constructed on land now assigned to parking. "As we move forward, most of our new construction will be focused on specialized buildings, such as chemistry, that are hard to accommodate in existing facilities," says Hurst. But one thing is certain: Any new building initiatives on Virginia Tech's campus will take place with the bigger picture in mind.

Lisa Goff is a Charlottesville freelance writer.

inform

AWARDS 99

Our jury of Boston architects held this year's submissions to a high standard, reviewing each entry with a discriminating eye. Five winners emerged from a field of 125 entries. "The common denominator is that they are honest expressions and under control," observed juror Peter Forbes. "So many of the projects were overwrought – I've never seen so many tortured reception desks." Added juror William Rawn: "We wanted to avoid recognizing warmed-over Morphosis design." Four of the awards came from the interiors category, which dominated the competition. None of the ten objects submitted for review was given an award, and one of the 14 entries in the landscape category made the grade.

20

The Jury



Peter Forbes, FAIA

Peter Forbes founded his practice in 1980 and built a reputation for producing buildings with rigorously simple forms and meticulous details. The designer of four Architectural Record Houses, he has taught at Harvard, MIT, and Virginia Tech, among other universities.



William Rawn, FAIA

William Rawn is an architect and widely respected urban designer. His firm received a 1995 national Honor Award for the Seiji Ozawa Hall at Tanglewood and a 1996 Honor Award for the West Main Street Corridor Study in Charlottesville.



Wellington Reiter, AIA

Wellington Reiter's practice, *Urban Instruments*, transcends the boundaries of art and architecture. His museum installations and public artworks serve as a laboratory for the development of ideas that emerge in his retail interiors, graphics, and furniture design.



LIGHT FANTASTIC

This tiny house, designed for a University of Maryland professor of art history, occupies a ten-acre site in Maryland. The client asked for two things – a simple cabin in the woods and the proper setting for a commissioned artwork: a sun drawing by artist Janet Saad Cook. Two function-driven wings flank the central space, a metal-and-glass room built to house the art installation. There, on



Photos: Julia Heine

Armatures attached to the ceiling hold the movable reflectors in place (left). Seen from outside, the house is easily understood as two solid bookends backed up to the central space (right).



21



The changing play of light inside gives the house a unique connection to nature (left).

a large neutral wall, the sun produces reflected images of light that change with the movement of the sun and clouds. "It has more than just a formal consistency, it's a consistency of idea," the jury said. "It's very minimal, it's spartan – so what did they use for decoration? These projections of reflected light. What could be more ephemeral than that?"

Architect:
Owners:
Contractor:

McInturff Architects
Josephine Withers
Joe Barry



PARTY LINE

Making a go of it in today's competitive call center market means getting a return on big investments in training while overcoming high turnover. This client wanted to attract the best employees and keep them. To support that goal, the architect was challenged to abandon the typical systems approach to call centers and, instead, create a strong visual environment with basic materials organized in unusual ways. Workstations made of solid core birch veneer doors and medium density fiberboard are organized along low partitions with trays on top to hold voice and data cabling. "There's an economy of means. And out of that economy of means they have gotten some direct and clear forms," the jury noted. "And it's clear there was no budget for a lot of exotic wood or materials."

Workstations were built on-site of simple but sturdy materials (above).

The conference room (right) has a bare bones aesthetic with painted surfaces and low-budget lighting.



Photos: Michael Moran

Architect:

CORE

Owners:

A&E Signature Service

Contractor:

Del Greco Construction Services



The associations share amenities such as the soaring lobby (above) and conference space (below).

Architect: Greenwell Goetz Architects
Owners: The Associations at 1307 New York Avenue
Contractor: Hitt Contracting

AWARDS 99



FOUR IN ONE

This project posed an unusual problem: how to create a cohesive conference facility for four educational associations while satisfying the aesthetic and functional needs of each client. In response, the design team invented a vocabulary of repeating elements that could be customized to fit each group's personality. The quirks of the existing Washington, D.C., office building (such as 36-inch-diameter columns and 10-foot ceilings) were highlighted to celebrate both the architectural and historic context of the building. "It has a nice luminous quality and the materials are skillfully used," said the jury. "Look at the tonal range – silver leaf, brushed metal, and wood. Some of these materials have the power to overwhelm, but here they are used deftly – right down to the floor. It's not a gratuitous change in material, but just enough to alert you something else is going on."

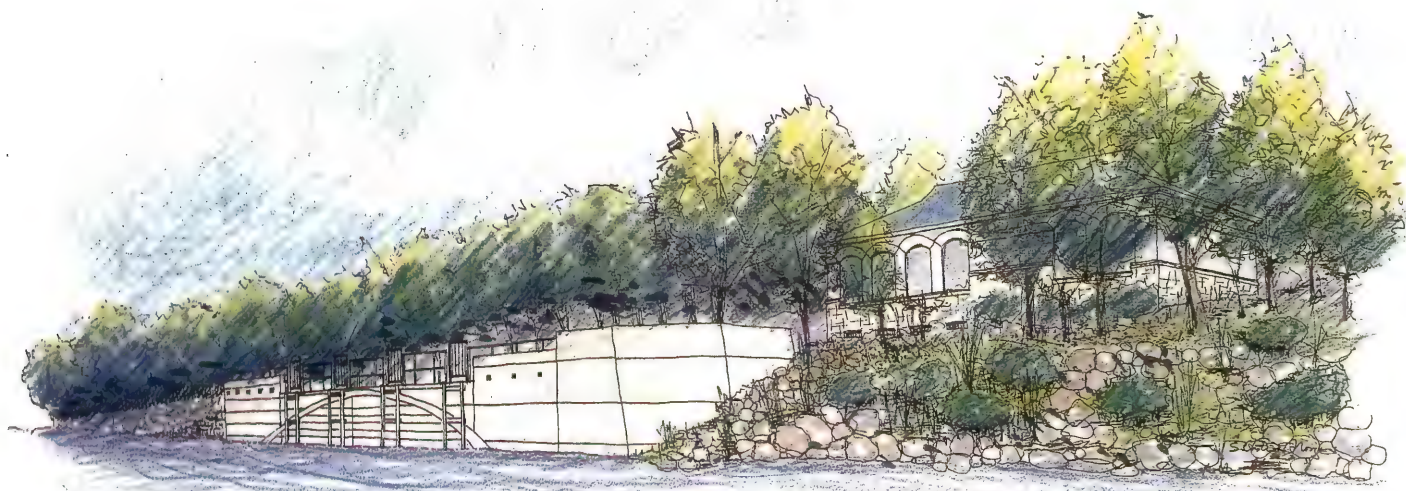
CURRENT EVENTS

When Spotsylvania County officials grew concerned that a new water treatment plant would compromise the pristine banks of the Rappahannock River, they hired an architect to design a 114-foot-long concrete headwall that would fit the landscape. Among its functional demands: the wall needed to hold four large intake pipes and serve as a mount for guardrails, a floating trash boom, and a set of movable screens. Although the architects were inspired by ruins of 19th century stone locks nearby, they opted for shaping and scoring the new concrete wall to echo the features of the locks, rather than parroting them literally. "We're attracted to the clarity of the formwork and the design of the arc and the horizontal elements," said the jury. "And we're glad it wasn't handled as a banal civil engineering project. Somebody identified a need which isn't often identified."

Katharyn Poplin McGhee

Architect: James O. McGhee Architects, P.C.
Engineer: Gannett Fleming Engineers and Planners
Owners: Spotsylvania County Dept. of Utilities
Contractor: MCI Constructors
Concrete Contractor: Araujo Construction

Scoring the concrete greatly improved what could have been a mundane public works project (above). A drawing of the wall envisioned how it would settle in the landscape (below).





The new boardwalk weaves its way unobtrusively through the wetlands of Huntley Meadows Park.

25

NATURAL SELECTION

A much-used boardwalk traversing the Fairfax County wetlands of Huntley Meadows Park, refuge to more than 200 species of birds, had been rendered unsafe by rising water. A new boardwalk was commissioned with improvements including new interpretive structures and a lookout tower. Finding structural supports that were kind to the environment posed the greatest challenge. The architect reasoned that screw piles, widely used for other applications, would work in this setting. Among the project's noteworthy features are thin guardrails designed to disappear when viewed from the side; their lack of horizontal members discourages young visitors from climbing. Said the jury: "The utter simplicity of the boardwalk is wonderful. It hovers over the marshland, and it is appropriate in its unobtrusiveness. Where the railing become more visible, they mitigate it by making it metal and making it lighter."

Architect/Engineer: TAMS Consultants, Inc.
Owners: Fairfax County Park Authority
Contractor: Avon Corporation



Metal railings appear where the walk rises to reach observation areas.

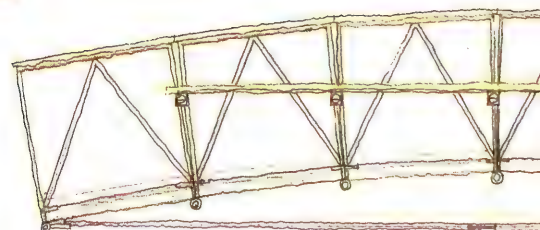


Special Award

NOT YOUR FATHER'S MOBILE HOME

The Nomadic Transit Module is an experimental house made to test design innovations and new technologies. Built with grant support and industry funding, the house was completed with faculty supervision over several years. Among its features: a frame of welded steel tubing, accessible cable trays serving the entire house, computerized control of electronic devices, and modular furnishings. "There seems to be a real allegiance to that fact that it is mobile – keeping it spare and lightweight, and expressing its mobility," said the jury. "As a thing that's somewhere between an RV and a mobile home, it's a real rethinking of the problem."

Designers: 88 students from the School of Architecture and Planning at Catholic University (full list of contributors appears online at aiava.org)



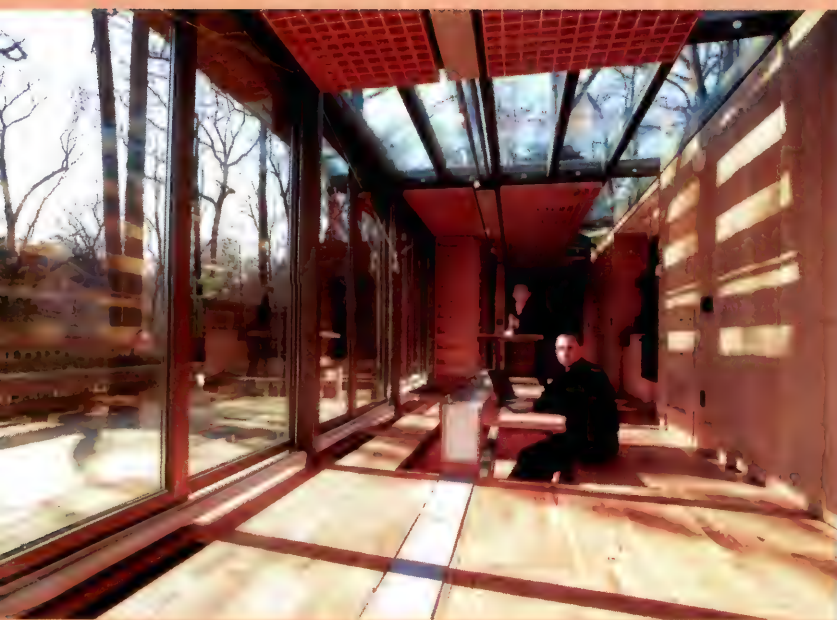
THE RED BRIDGE

This entry to a Blacksburg house investigates the structural problems common to thin steel arches, which typically fail by bursting upwards. Seven square steel segments comprise the arch, which is restrained longitudinally by steel tension ties and vertically by a steel bar on the side of each segment. "We really appreciate the effort that went into doing something of this size – using the concrete as a sort of counterweight to the tension that's developed in the rest of the steel work," said the jury. "It's a well thought-out idea."

Designer and fabricator: Dennis Kilper, Jr., Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Studies

Owners: Dr. and Mrs. Charles L. Taylor

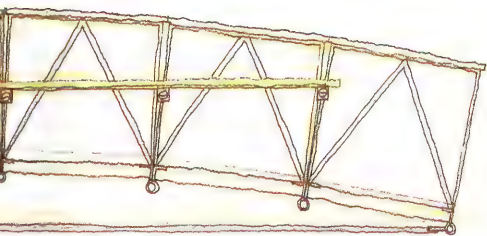
Concrete finishing: Tory Stephen



POWERS OF THREE

This three-legged stool is a study in materials – in this case, steel and ash. The designer focused attention on the center joint and how it gathers the steel legs designed to rise from the floor, cross beneath the seat, and hook the opposite edge. "We liked the notion that the user's presence strengthens the joint," said the jury. "It turns the perimeter of the seat into a kind of tension ring. So it derives its form truly from the materials and the structural principals."





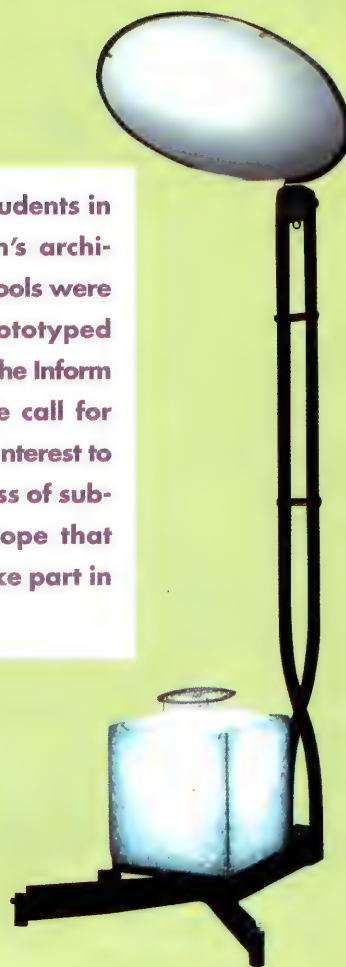
About the jury

Student entries were judged by a Richmond panel composed of Todd Dykshorn, of Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner; David Keith, AIA, of Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner; and Camden Whitehead, AIA, associate professor in the department of interior design at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Designer: Kathy Heizer, Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Studies



For the first time, students in each of the region's architecture and design schools were invited to submit prototyped objects for inclusion in the Inform Awards program. The call for entries stirred enough interest to generate a critical mass of submissions, with the hope that more students will take part in year two.



SHINE ON

The study of architect Carlo Scarpa informed the design of this six-foot-tall floor lamp. Its light source – a 50-watt halogen bulb – glows from within a cube of tempered glass pieces. Direct light bounces off a white plexiglass disk angled at the top of a steel frame. The jury was intrigued by the strength of the idea – an element that glows paired with an element that distributes the light – and admired the skillfully fabricated connections. But they added the project bears further refinement. "The armature that supports this is so much more carefully considered and constructed than the plexiglass box containing the glass," they said. "The box is not so refined."

Designer: Kartikey Patel, Virginia Tech College of Architecture and Urban Studies

AWARDS 99



BEST OF SHOW / FIRST AWARD



DESIGN FIRST AWARD - BEST OF MARYLAND

Project: Historic St. Phillip's Episcopal Church
 Architectural Firm: Muse Architects
 Jury's Comments: "Simple and elegant...blends perfectly with existing structures...clearly the work of someone who cares"

Photography by: Stephen Muse



DESIGN FIRST AWARD

Project: Sidwell Friends School, Upper
 Architectural Firm: Bowie Gridley Architects
 Jury's Comments: "Careful expression of function...simple execution...clean & sharp brick design"

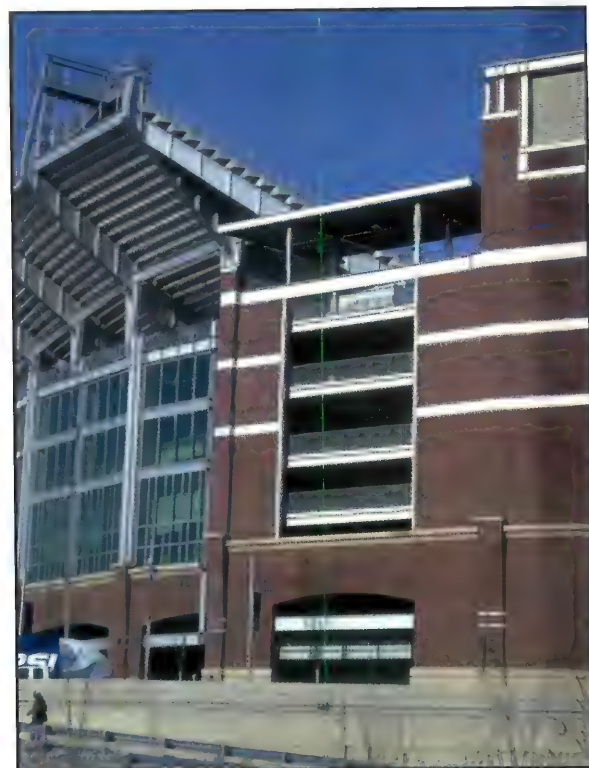
Photography by: Maxwell Mackenzie



DESIGN FIRST AWARD - BEST OF VIRGINIA

Project: New Engineering Building
 Architectural Firm: Shriver & Holland Associates
 Jury's Comments: "Excellent choice of masonry...use of stone and limestone is appropriate and skillful...a nice combination of textures"

Photography by: Prakash Patel



DESIGN FIRST AWARD

Project: Baltimore Ravens Stadium
 Architectural Firm: HOK Sports Group
 Entry Submitted by: L&L Supply Corporation
 Jury's Comments: "Inventive use of brick...old style stadium but clearly of its time"



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DESIGN PRESERVATION AWARD

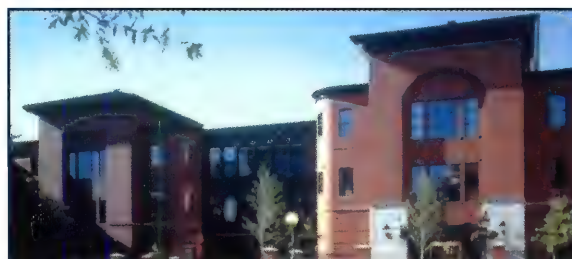
Project: The Ponce de Leon Cooperative
Architectural Firm: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
Jury's Comments: "Outstanding...skillful and sensitive...this architect should be commended for the diligence of his efforts"



Project: Old Dominion University
 TeleTechNet Center
Architectural Firm: Ayres/Saint/Gross, Inc.
Jury's Comments: "Careful harmony of simply expressed parts...a design that compliments existing conditions and structures"
Photography by: Alan Karchmer



Project: The Langley School
 Classroom Building
Architectural Firm: Bowie Gridley Architects
Jury's Comments: "Playful juxtaposition of materials...masonry is used in a very expressive manner...a sharp, clean design"
Photography by: Maxwell Mackenzie



Project: Shockoe Plaza
Architectural Firm: CMSS Architects, P.C.
Jury's Comments: "Good detailing and selection of materials...intelligently handled...beautiful fabric composed of skillful parts"
Photography by: Judy Davis



Project: Kent Island High School
Architectural Firm: Grimm and Parker Architects
Jury's Comments: "Good colors...careful juxtaposition of materials...the project displays a real crispness and level of rigor"
Photography by: Ken Wyner

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DESIGN FIRST AWARD - BEST OF VIRGINIA

Project: 1707 Prince
Architectural Firm: Lewis & Associates, LTD
Jury's Comments: "Simple and elegant...each level is different yet consistent...a nice solution for a difficult urban site."

DESIGN FIRST AWARD - BEST OF MARYLAND

Project: 460 Grindall Street
Architectural Firm: Marks, Thomas, & Associates
Jury's Comments: "A beautiful project...spectacular views...this exquisite house has a proud presence"
Photography by: James Parker

DESIGN FIRST AWARD - BEST OF THE DISTRICT

Project: Turkish Embassy
Architectural Firm: Shalom Baranes Associates
Jury's Comments: "Beautiful execution of a complex building...there is a beautiful correctness about all parts of this project"
Photography by: Maxwell Mackenzie



Project: Integrated Health Services
Architectural Firm: The Hillier Group;
 Cochran, Stephenson, & Donkervoet, Inc.
Entry Submitted by: Baltimore Masonry
Jury's Comments: "Color variations create a unified campus"



Project: College Park Aviation Museum
Architectural Firm: HOK
Entry Submitted by: Potomac Valley Brick
Jury's Comments: "Nice brick detailing...subtle yet inventive...simple and well done"



Project: Mervis Diamonds
Architectural Firm: MR&A Architects
Submitted by: Genco Masonry, Inc.
Jury's Comments: "A singular and elegant expression...materials compliment the elegance of the design"



Project: Central Cooling Plant Addition
Architectural Firm: James William Ritter Architect
Jury's Comments: "Nice use of brick...the various patterns are successful...a positive addition to the site"



Project: Windsor Mill Post Office
Architectural Firm: Sorg and Associates, P.C.
Jury's Comments: "Has a subtle richness...nice brick design...simple use of masonry"
Photography by: Anice Hoachlander



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People often dream of building their own home and gradually, as time and money allow, improving the property with a garden of their own making. Martha Derthick managed to get it the other way around.

Derthick, now a retired professor of government and foreign affairs at the University of Virginia, acquired part of a long-established specimen garden in Charlottesville and beside it built a home tailored to her love of learning and her affection for nature. The house, which was sited specifically to preserve the rich collection of azaleas and rhododendrons, is designed around an open, loftlike living room and library that brings the natural beauty of the outdoors in.

When architect Gwyn Gilliam, principal of Gwyn C. Gilliam, AIA of Charlottesville, first talked to Derthick, it was clear that the professor "really liked architecture and wanted to make a statement with her house." The good news was that client and architect immediately discovered their shared passion for a Modern palette of materials: concrete, steel, and stone. That would help pave the way to a house made of simple materials and unpretentious forms.

But Gilliam says creating just the right house for the site required much study, both because of the steeply sloping land and the proximity of 50-year-old plants which she did not want to disturb. It was the sloping land that had discouraged others from building there before. "I didn't want to build the earth up to the street level, or tear up the landscape getting down to the house during construction," says Gilliam. "So the house is



David Sagarin

Grace in the Garden

By Vernon Mays



Views of the garden get better as the house grows taller (above). The natural setting filters into the house through the large window wall (left).



Detailing in the house is simple and clean (left), with an emphasis on texture and proportion.

as close to the street as it can be – on a little sliver of land between the setback line and where the mature plants begin.”

During the planning stage, Gilliam learned of the site’s special history. Bought in the 1930s by Warren Cloud, an employee of the C&O Railroad, the three-acre plot was carved from a large dairy farm. Cloud spent the rest of his life collecting and hybridizing rhododendron and azaleas to create a magical place in what is now a wooded glen. But time and neglect had compromised the garden, and Derthick was passionate about bringing it back to life.


Because of the garden’s importance, entering the garden itself is as vital as entering the house. One approaches the building from a gravel parking area, stepping down onto the upper terrace. There the first view of the garden is revealed, but it is an incomplete view. Tempted by curiosity, a visitor can continue directly into the garden or enter the house instead, where a striking view from the living room balcony is framed by the 18-by-22-foot glass opening in the east-facing wall.

Derthick’s basic requirements for the house were met with consideration for the garden. As far as functional space goes, she wanted a combination bedroom/study, a guestroom, and a place for her books. Anticipating retirement at the time when the house was being designed, she knew decades of accumulated books and papers would soon be coming home.

From the very beginning, Gilliam organized the house as a division between public and private spaces. That idea took physical form in two ways. First, the main facades of





A cozy library is tucked beneath the balcony close at hand to the spacious living area.



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Walls are stucco over a wood frame; balcony supports and handrails are steel.

the house were designed to express the particulars of the site, with a relatively closed and plain face toward the public street and a more open and expressive face to the private realm of the garden. In form, the house also embodies the public/private idea with its division into two parts: the two-story-high living room/library and the four-story tower including private spaces such as bedrooms and bathrooms and functional spaces such as the kitchen.

"Even so, we wanted to fit into the neighborhood and not overwhelm the original house next door – a one-story Cape Cod," says Gilliam. Because the new house nestles beside a large, double Chinese chestnut tree, Gilliam speaks metaphorically of the residence as a treehouse with an arm extended to embrace a room in the garden. That blending of house and nature becomes a key experience for anyone inside, with wide-open views seen through the glass and, overhead, the latticework of steel trusses painted the pale green of spring leaves.

"That was my intent – that the library be an outdoor room that just happened to have an enclosure. It was always thought of as a room in the garden," Gilliam says.

A key aspect of the garden room's aesthetic is its floor, a poured-in-place concrete slab with a power-troweled surface. Gilliam and Derthick decided to enhance the concrete color with a chemical stain, but the concrete subcontractor cautioned the outcome was unpredictable. Tests were done beforehand, yet the first attempt to stain the finished floor produced a color that

continued on page 34



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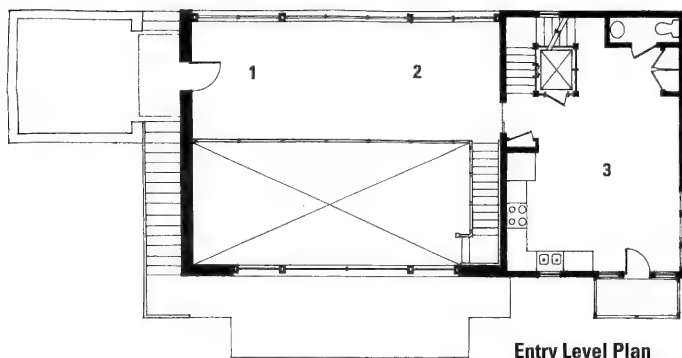
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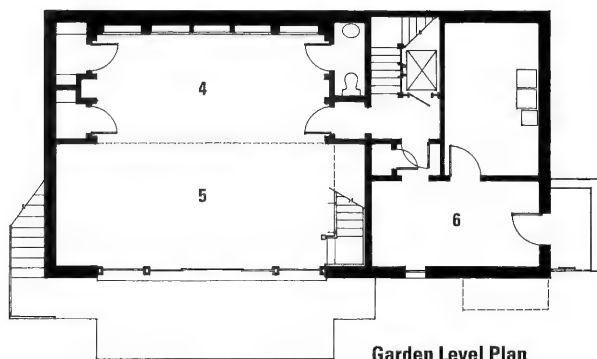
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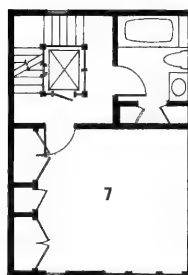
Entry Level Plan



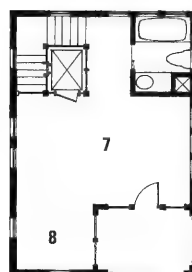
Garden Level Plan



- 1 Entry
- 2 Dining
- 3 Kitchen
- 4 Library



Third Floor Plan



Fourth Floor Plan

- 5 Living Room
- 6 Workroom
- 7 Bedroom
- 8 Office

continued from page 32

looked more like mud than the desired chestnut brown effect. An acid wash was applied to lighten the color. Then another light stain was applied. By the time all was said and done, the concrete began to resemble metamorphic rock. "So it began to look like real stone," Gilliam enthuses. "In the end, we couldn't be happier with it. But it was a miraculous journey."

The restrained aesthetic qualities of the space are a fitting complement to Derthick's collection of furnishings that have a Shaker-like simplicity. It's not by chance that everything has an intended place in the new house, because as a matter of course Gilliam uses a furniture inventory created by her clients as a reference during the design phase. "The inventory is a way to get to know their heart. It also helps me get ideas about the aesthetic the house should have."

The feel of this particular house, of course, is influenced greatly by what grows outside, where Derthick has invested countless hours in resurrecting Cloud's garden. Now she is beginning to weave her own ideas into the site, such as converting the old fish pond into a bog garden. "Martha is taking care of it," says Gilliam. "She has reclaimed this garden pretty much by herself."

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Architect: Sverdrup / Ayers Saint Gross, Arlington

Project: VCU Life Sciences Building

The 132,500 s.f. classroom, laboratory, lecture hall, and greenhouse is sited on the corner of Cary and Harrison streets on the VCU Academic Campus. Completing the science quad, the facility will house biology and biomedical engineering, as well as the Center for Environmental Studies. Tel: 703-351-4200



Architect: SFCS, Inc., Roanoke

Project: Westminster-Canterbury on Chesapeake Bay

SFCS is designing a \$54 million expansion and renovation of this continuing care retirement community in Virginia Beach. New construction will include a 14-story tower comprised of 164 independent living apartments, each with a patio or balcony. Contact Gregory A. Jones at gaj@sfcs.com.

36



Architect: Marcellus Wright Cox & Smith Architects, Richmond

Project: Library and Administration Building, The Steward School

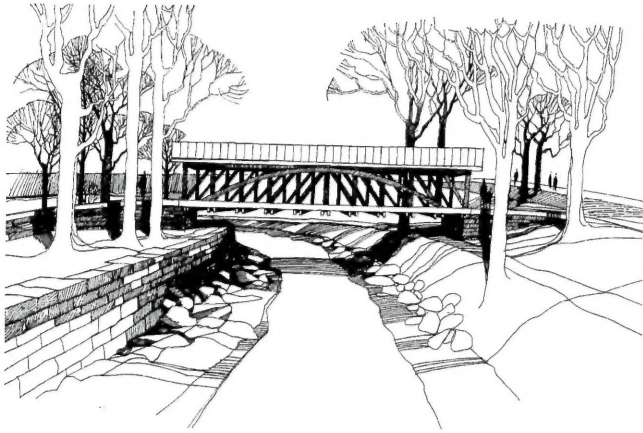
The focal point of a private K-12 school, this 17,400 s.f. facility houses administrative offices, a learning resource center, and school store on the first floor and a library and media center on the second floor. A cupola brings daylight into the center of the library and into the first-floor lobby. Tel: 804-780-9067



Architect: The Chenault Harvey Group, Glen Allen

Project: Swansboro Baptist Church

The firm has master planned this Richmond church's three-acre urban site. Phase 1 includes a 300-seat sanctuary, chapel, and transformation of existing facilities into fellowship and office space. An education building, gardens, and other site improvements will complete the worship village. Tel: 804-747-6900



Architect: Carlton Abbott and Partners, P.C., Williamsburg

Project: Jordan's Point Park Master Plan

This sketch depicts a proposed covered bridge over Woods Creek in Lexington. The bridge recalls detailing of a predecessor at this site in the early 20th century, a bridge taken out by flood waters. The work is part of the Jordan's Point Park Master Plan being prepared by the firm. Tel: 757-220-1095



Architect: Baskervill & Son, Richmond

Project: MCV Hospital/Gateway Building

Baskervill & Son, with Shepley Bullfinch Richardson & Abbot of Boston, are architects for a new 218,000 s.f. clinical services building. Upper levels are designed as clinical extensions of Main Hospital's inpatient floors. The planning challenge was to make a new formal entry to the main buildings. Tel: 804-343-1010

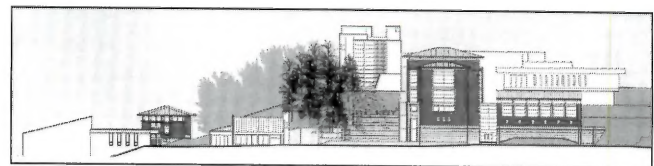
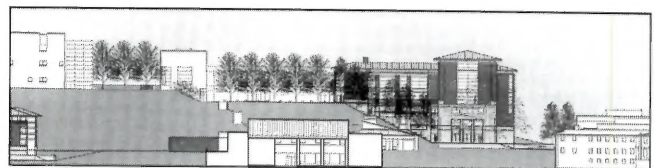
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Architect: Huff-Morris Architects, P.C., Richmond

Project: The Wesleyan Church of Hamburg

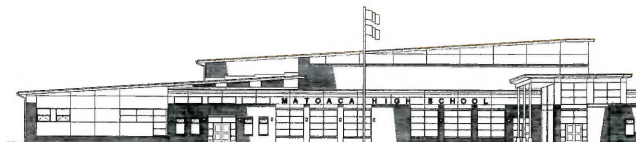
This 1,500-seat worship center and fellowship mall in Hamburg, N.Y., is designed to reflect the architecture of daily life, such as a shopping mall with elements including a bookstore and food court. Multimedia and drama presentation capabilities are designed into the worship area. Tel: 804-343-1505



Architect: VMD0 Architects, P.C., Charlottesville

Project: Student Center, University of Virginia's College at Wise

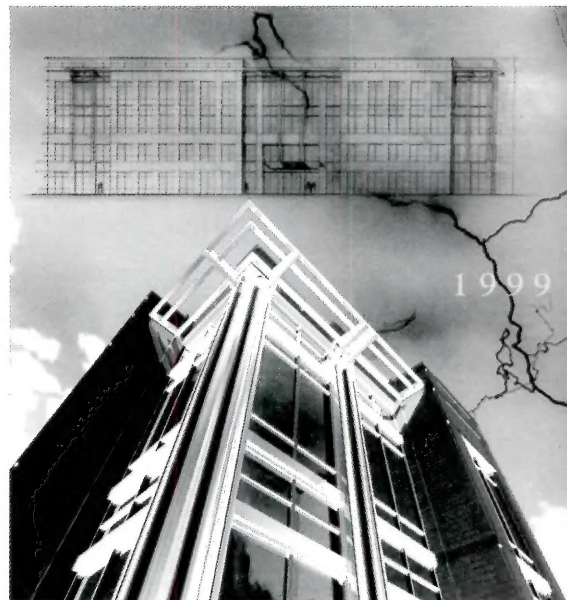
The new center civilizes an imposing 60-foot hillside that impedes movement between the upper and lower campuses. Located at the intersection of commuter and residential student paths, the center offers a post office, store, fitness center, lounge, cafe, and transport along the hillside. Tel: 804-296-5684



Architect: Bond Comet Westmoreland + Hiner Architects, Richmond

Project: New Matoaca High School

This project is a new 280,000 s.f. Chesterfield County high school whose design is based on the "Academic House" concept. A main theme is to fully integrate technology in the educational process. The school, scheduled for occupancy in 2002, will accommodate 1,750 students and some 200 staff. Tel: 804-788-4774

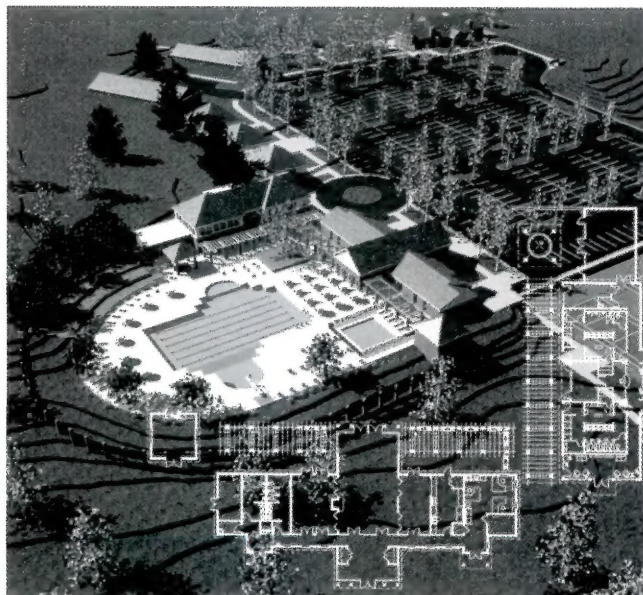


Architect: Little & Associates Architects, Charlotte, N.C.

Project: Trinity Place

Currently underway, this four-story Class A office building overlooks the new entertainment and sports arena in Raleigh, N.C. A contrast of traditional and progressive language is expressed in the articulations of the building's mass, creating a strong vertical expression at the corners. Tel: 704-525-6350

38



Architect: Lavigne Associates Architects, Alexandria

Project: Penderbrook Community & Recreation Center

Located in Fairfax, the Master Plan includes 34,000 s.f. of outdoor improvements and 11,200 s.f. of renovation and new construction. The new design doubles the area and unifies the existing facilities into a new village center. Tel: 703-739-3206. www.laarchitects.com



Architect: Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern, Inc. (HSMM), Roanoke

Project: Center in the Square - Atrium Renovation

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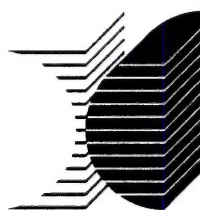
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With little fanfare but many small embellishments, George Nasis, AIA, and Kevin Kattwinkel, AIA have designed a refined and introspective space for studying music at Old Dominion University. The Ludwig Diehn Composers' Room has no windows at eye level; all of the natural light comes from above. Stored there are manuscripts, papers, and published scores of contemporary Virginia composers, as well as audio and video recordings.

Essentially a new wing of the existing Diehn Fine and Performing Arts Center, the composers' room is a 7,000-square-foot retreat affording reading, exhibit, listening, and seminar spaces for faculty, students, and scholars. The punishing sun experienced in bayside Norfolk is filtered through skylights with low-e glass and a high shading coefficient. A coffered ceiling further softens the light by bouncing it throughout the spaces.

On the exterior, Nasis, who heads the Virginia Beach office of Moseley, Harris & McClintock, extended the color and materials palette from the Diehn Center to the Composers' Room. The effect is a seamless addition. The street façade is punctuated by a gabled "bay window" that not only mimics the vocabulary of the Diehn Center, but also connects to the skylight above the listening room. In addition to expanding the room visually for those inside, the connection of the vertical and horizontal glass components provides some insight into the space for pedestrians.

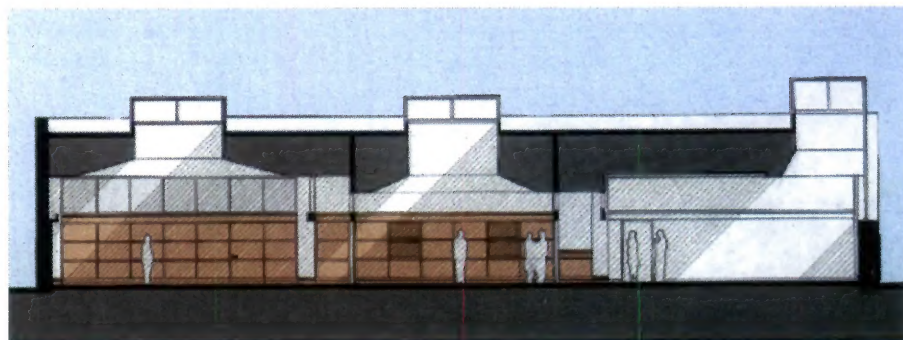
Refined detailing conceals the simply functional aspects of the building. Doors, for example, disappear into simple wall paneling. Electric and computer data outlets recede into mahogany accents in the white oak flooring. And the dark-bronze windows of the staff workroom follow the geometry of the wall paneling, allowing the staff to maintain watch over the spaces unobtrusively. The only jarring note comes from the required exit signs, which nestle tightly in recessed sections along the light trays that run continuously around the major rooms.

Used as many as three times a week by the music department for receptions, chamber groups, and master classes, the reading room has gained a reputation as one of the classier spaces on campus, says music department chairman Dennis Zeisler. —T. Duncan Abernathy, AIA

Music for the Eyes



An atmosphere for study is aided by placing the source of natural light overhead.



Building Section

0 10 20



The building exterior (left) takes its cues for materials and form from the existing Fine and Performing Arts Center.